(c) and (d) The Government had decided to include Cotton Seed as an essential commodity in the Schedule to the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(e) The Government has taken steps to protect poor sections of society through Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Antodaya Anna Yojna (AAY). Under the TPDS, wheat, rice, coarse grains and kerosene are allocated to State Governments/UTs for distribution through the Fair Price Shops. The Central Issue Price for rice and wheat has not been revised since 2002. For wheat it remains at Rs 4.15 per kg for BPL and Rs 2 per kg for AAY. For rice, it is Rs 5.65 per kg for BPL and Rs 3 per kg for AAY.Pulses are distributed to the State Governments under the PDS @ Rs.10 per kg subsidy scheme. In view of the rise in prices of essential commodities witnessed during the recent past, Government has allocated imported edible oils to State/UT Governments. States are free to distribute the oil through whatever outlets they decide on.

Foodgrains distribution under Antyodaya Anna Yojana

2514. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is providing foodgrains to States for distribution to BPL ration cardholders at subsidized rates;

(b) if so, the details of the total number of BPL cardholders in the country on basis of which foodgrains are provided to States indicating volume of allocation of foodgrains, State-wise during last three years;

(c) whether Government has also been providing foodgrains at greater subsidized rates to the States for distribution to poorer families under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana; and

(d) if so, the details about its volume and number of beneficiaries during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Government allocates subsidized foodgrains to States & UTs under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) @ 35 Kg per Below Poverty Line (BPL)/Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) family per month, based on 1993-94 poverty estimates of Planning Commission and population estimates of Registrar General of India as on 1st March 2000 or number of BPL and AAY ration cards actually issued, whichever is less. Presently the allocations are being made for 6.5 crore such families.

AAY is a subset of the poorest of BPL families. Therefore, while the scale of issue of foodgrains per family per month is the same for BPL and AAY, the central issue prices for AAY are lower than those for BPL.

Details of State-wise allocations of foodgrains (rice & wheat) to BPL and AAY categories of families during 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 are at Statement-I (*See* below). The details of State-wise number of AAY ration cardholders during 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 are given in Statement-II.